



# pentagram

Lectorium Rosicrucianum

The new vital body  
Mary Magdalene and the Light  
Put on the perfect man  
Resurrection in the light vesture  
Edda: The story of creation  
Apollonius of Tyana

OCTOBER 2011 NUMBER 5

# pentagram

volume 33 number 5 2011

## content

explorations into the nature of our  
consciousness – the new vital body  
*j van rijckenborgh* 2  
the rose in the desert 6  
symbols and far-reaching insights  
mary magdalene and the light 10  
mary magdalene, the world soul in the  
human being 13  
put on the perfect man 18  
resurrection in the light vesture 23  
the edda, the story of creation 29  
knowledge conference at noverosa  
identity, personality and  
spirit nucleus 35  
book review:  
the nuctemeron of  
apollonius of tyana,  
the twelve hours of liberation 39  
the life of apollonius of tyana  
based on an article by  
Fred A. Pruyn 44

Cover: One of India's most fascinating ceiling  
frescoes, which expresses the joy of the heavenly  
beings. In the Fortress of Ahichhatragh in Nagaur  
from the twelfth century, an important trade  
centre at the time

Is inventing yourself, being able to be and remain yourself,  
and in this way closing the door to all other 'selves' that  
you might be, the end of the quest for your identity? This is  
what young people wondered during a conference about  
knowledge in spring 2011. You can read an impression of  
this special weekend in this issue of the Pentagram.  
For a seeking person, learning to know himself wholly  
coincides with a never-ending quest for the mysteries of  
life – a quest that has occupied man throughout time, and  
which time and again has incited him to leave the familiar  
paths, seeking new answers. The reader will find a few dis-  
coveries and records of seekers of all times in this issue of  
the Pentagram. We express the hope that he will in their  
thoughts recognise something of his own quest.

'The greatest of all lessons is knowing yourself, because if a  
person knows himself, he knows God.'  
Clemens of Alexandria.

# the new vital body

*J. van Rijckenborgh*

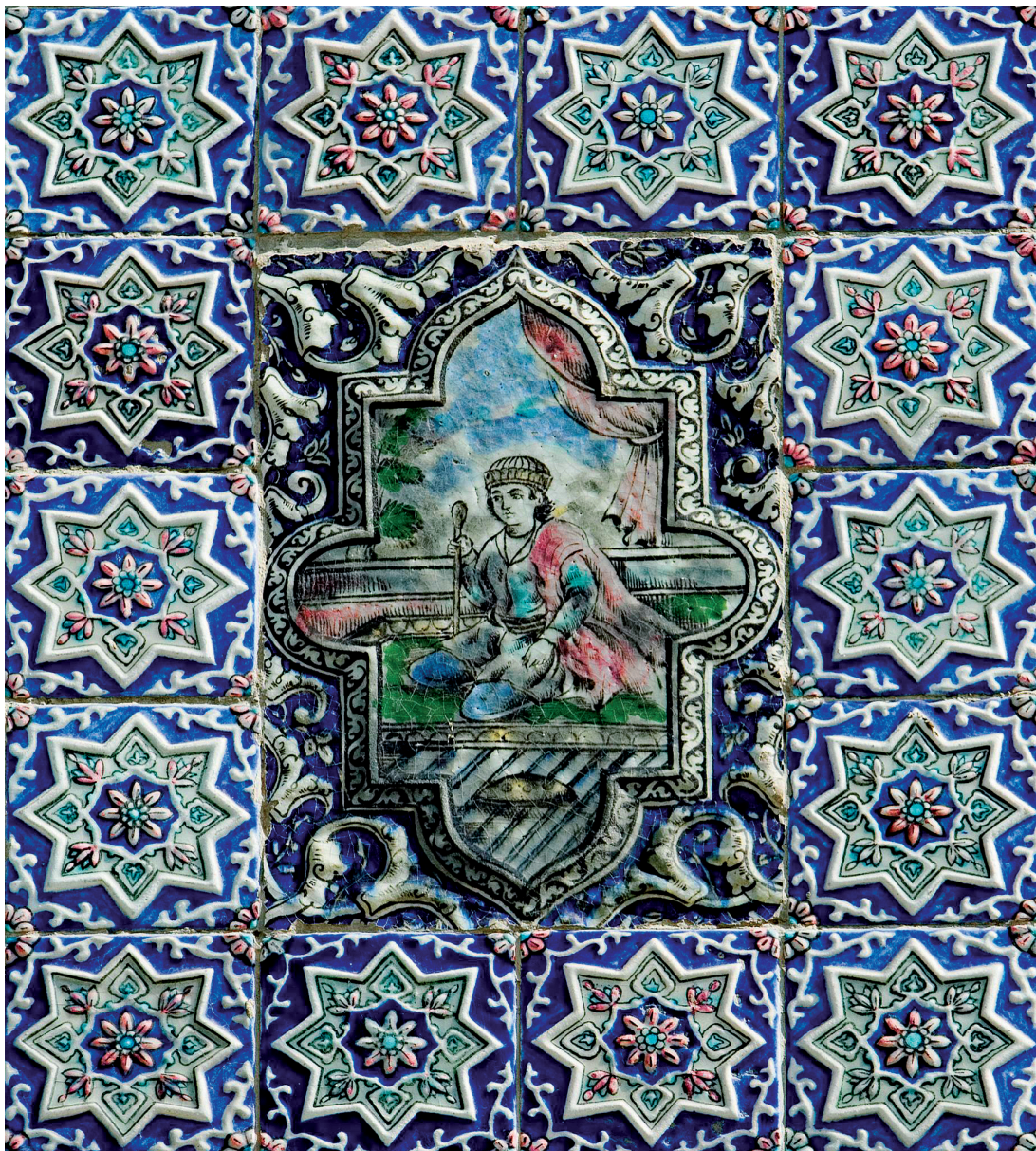
If we want to give you an idea of the new vehicle of the reborn soul that is erected when the soul has entered the Light birth of God, we should explore our way very carefully. The number of its aspects is so overwhelmingly large that we would certainly need many discussions to achieve a somewhat acceptable overview. This is why this explanation should be seen as only an introductory, sober, and obviously incomplete description of this extremely important topic.

We know that the physical body has a so-called etheric double, also called the etheric or vital body. The etheric body has approximately the same shape as the physical body and also expresses the same type. We might say that the etheric body is the matrix for the physical body. This is why the universal teachings say that everything begins in the etheric body. When something new must be built, we should always pay attention to the etheric vehicle. If a person becomes ill, the cause is always to be found in the vital body. This is why it is said (and we repeat very well-known facts here) that the restoration of health must begin in the vital body, and that, when this restoration is clearly manifested there, the restoration of the physical body will automatically follow. The vital body is basically composed of the four familiar ethers, with successive degrees of density and vibration. In the vital body, we distinguish a structure of lines of force similar to the nervous system. If you have ever seen a diagram of the nervous system in an ana-

tomical atlas, you can to some extent imagine what this system of lines of force looks like. In the vital body, the ethers are assimilated, concentrated and differentiated according to the various necessary functions, after which they are transferred to the physical body. We might say that the physical body inhales the ethers. In this context, the skin plays an important role. We inhale the ethers, we assimilate the ethers through the skin. If the skin does not function properly, there is not proper ether assimilation either, and if there is no proper ether assimilation, the physical body will languish. In the body, there are also very special entrance gates for the ethers, for instance, the spleen. However, also understand that the whole body, every inch of it, assimilates ethers. Even the internal parts of the body inhale ethers because, as explained before, the etheric body pervades the whole physical vehicle. The nature, the biological state, and the degree of crystallisation of the physical body are, therefore, determined by the ethers



*Jan van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri were the founders of the Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross. In this School, they explained and exemplified the path of the liberation of the soul to their pupils in all kinds of ways, often on the basis of original texts from the universal teachings.*



**Seventeenth-century ceramic picture on one of the outside walls of the Golestan palace (Flower palace) in Teheran, Iran**



**Pasture landscape, Tom Maakestadt**

that the physical body assimilates. Our whole material manifestation, the whole human personality can be explained on the basis of the four ethers.

The ethers themselves are brought into and kept in the familiar state, experienced by us, by our individual magnetic field, via our personal magnetic source, the magnetic soul nucleus in the fourth brain cavity.

Therefore, we may say that the human soul state determines the state of the etheric body, and the state of the physical body is manifested accordingly.

The rebirth of the soul, which causes a complete change of the individual magnetic field, implies, therefore, a wholly new, personal field

of life and, consequently, also a wholly new ether assimilation.

The ordinary vital body and the ordinary physical body are both fundamentally unsuitable for the new assimilation. Therefore, the development of a new vital body with a new system of lines of force is needed that is able to assimilate the new ethers, the four holy foods, which have an entirely different vibration than the ordinary ethers of the nature of death. It is inconceivable that the four holy foods would be able to descend into a body of ordinary nature.

The assimilation of the new ethers necessarily implies, among other things, a process of demolition of the old etheric body, and there-

If we stand in the birth of the new soul, our physical body – and therefore also the etheric double – will gradually become more subtle

fore also of the old physical body. Once the new soul is born, a systematic demolition of the old personality begins. However, after everything we have discussed, you will, of course, no longer consider this dramatic. Moreover, our personal existence is a mortal body, and this will disappear anyway. Through illness or other causes of decline, our ordinary physical vehicle and our ordinary etheric vehicle will be lost.

In the process that we try to describe, the issue is another cause of death, but now a death unto life. If we stand in the birth of the new soul, our physical body, and therefore also the etheric double, will gradually become more subtle. The vitality of our health diminishes, which does not mean that organic defects or illnesses set in, but our whole state will become purer and more serene. Henceforth, we should take a more tenuous and, to a certain extent, weaker constitution into account which, however, can be maintained in complete harmony until the end. There is no question whatsoever that a debilitating or painful disease would be able to develop in and through this process of mortification, the *endura*.

The new soul has, as we explained, a hermaphroditic nature. It is, therefore, self-creative. When the fundamental radiation of the Gnosis can be assimilated, a division into seven aspects will develop in this fundamental magnetic power: then the sanctifying Seven-

Spirit manifests itself in our soul state.

A very powerful light emanates from the new soul, a radiant fire, comparable to the fiery tail of a comet. In this ray of fire, seven aspects can be clearly discerned: they are the seven new chakras of the new vital body. Therefore, the new soul is wholly able to be self-creative, and it differentiates from itself a structure of lines of force, in which the fire column with its seven aspects occupies the central place. Thus we see how a new vital body arises from the new soul, which should generate the manifestation of a new physical vehicle, not born of nature, a vehicle with a very tenuous structure and a very noble form.

Once this construction has been completed (and this development occurs relatively quickly), the old being can, if so desired, be discarded and may be buried. The new being has arisen in the self-constructed tomb. In this way, the reborn one stands as the resurrected one in the self-constructed tomb, not only as to his soul state, but also as to his personality. Like Christian Rosycross, he can merrily testify: 'While living, I made this temple my tomb.' Through self-demolition as to ordinary nature, the miracle of self-ascent into the Divine nature has been accomplished. ✨

**Reference:**

This article is based on: J. van Rijkenborgh,

*The Gnosis in Present-day Manifestation, Part V, chapter V.*

Haarlem, Roze kruis Pers, 1980

# the rose in the desert

The modern Rosycross sometimes poetically refers to the inner life as 'the rose of the mysteries'. 'The rose of the heart, the primordial atom, the spirit spark, is a wondrous mystery. It is like a mirror, the mirror of the mysteries.' This means a treasury filled with inner values that in many cases are still to be found and unveiled. This is why the person who begins to seek is hardly able to fathom its spiritual scope.



It concerns values, buried in the depths, in the centre of the microcosm, in the house, the temporary inhabitant of which is the human being, but about which he actually knows very little. These values belong to 'the one', which the ancient Gnostics called the monad, one spark of the Spirit, the original nucleus of life of the microcosm, which is temporarily linked with us, transient people, through the heart.

Throughout time, the Rosicrucians have referred to this special centre as the rose. On the basis of this thought, which we seekers try to confirm as a well-defined idea in our lives, we call ourselves and feel ourselves to be modern Rosicrucians.

#### UNKNOWN THOUGH RECOGNISED KNOWLEDGE

An inner voice has communicated this to our consciousness as it were, and has made it acceptable for us. We feel attracted to the Rosicrucian idea and to everything related to it. The same is true with regard to the innate conviction that we, as physical human beings, are part of a microcosm, an invisible being, the influence of which we experience in our lives, but the life system of which is largely unknown. We are hardly aware of it. We realise that we know as much of it as the Spiritual School and its universal teachings have revealed to us through its power field. Nevertheless, this knowledge sounds familiar. In one way or another, it is logical to us; we recognise it inwardly and accept it. We find it

logical that we are more than only a physical, mortal being and that a much more far-reaching power is present behind our existence.

In the universal teachings, the microcosm is represented as a mirror image of the macrocosm, in which what is small is equal to what is large. On the basis of this analogy, also the microcosm is a very complicated life system, a planet in miniature. What the gnostic philosophy of all times tries to explain is that this microcosm, this planet in miniature, was once pulled out of its orbit. It no longer follows its predetermined path, its cycle around the central spiritual sun, but it deviates from it in ever further expanding spirals.

**A SOLAR WIND OF PRIMORDIAL SUBSTANCE** In the course of its wanderings, during its long peregrination, it has strayed far from its destiny. It became caught in a world of rising, shining and fading, in a form of manifestation that also comes and goes. And on this long way, the microcosm has lost its shine and original glory. Instead, other forces have developed in the firmament of the microcosm, as weeds in a neglected garden. In this way, it became impossible that the microcosmic planet would still be able to function along the lines of the divine idea from which it once originated, namely according to an idea, a plan that enabled an ascent, progress and an expansion of the divine idea in its own, original field of creation. The ancient wisdom teachings spoke of divine sparks, generated in the primordial field of

### Very old?

Many young people have the feeling that they 'are very old'. They do not feel as young as their current age suggests. They also know the feeling as if they have come from somewhere far away. In our circles, we then often hear that these young people actually already knew many things that they, a

shorter or longer time ago, heard in the Youthwork of the Rosycross.

Oh well, you are also young, and what should you do with all those special stories and words?

You have recognised their truth, and it clearly appeals to you. However, sometimes it is also a burden that you

experience as a learning and working young person. Store all of it, live accordingly if you can, but above all, live as a free and happy human being, who inwardly knows that there is more than simply the material life that is now rushing at you.

creation as 'the vesture of God', also called the 'exhalation of the Spirit'. This divine breath unceasingly pulsates through the universe as a primordial solar wind. Without this pulsating movement, life is not possible.

Life is and remains a reflection of this divine breath of life. After all, 'Life' is the primordial movement in the universe, the divine breath of life of the Seven-Spirit, the seven formative rays that shaped the cosmos and that unceasingly continue to do so. They form the sevenfold breath of life that moves and propels creation. These seven primordial streams gradually guide the all and everything to fulfilment of the divine idea which, after all, flows through the whole of creation.

**SHREDS OF MEMORY** Let us now try to survey the coherence of all of this: Seven-Spirit and creation are one. Regardless of how far a creature as microcosm has strayed from the original idea of the All-Spirit, the seven primordial streams lead him back to the point of departure.

Just as the earth is a part of the sevenfold world cosmos, similarly, the microcosm is a sevenfold system of spheres, rotating within each other. Its nucleus is also sevenfold. We sometimes speak of the rose with seven petals. The sevenfold, spiritual body of the Spiritual School combines these striving microcosms into a new cosmos that is unceasingly focused on this holy Seven-Spirit.

Let us keep this insight, this gnosis that the

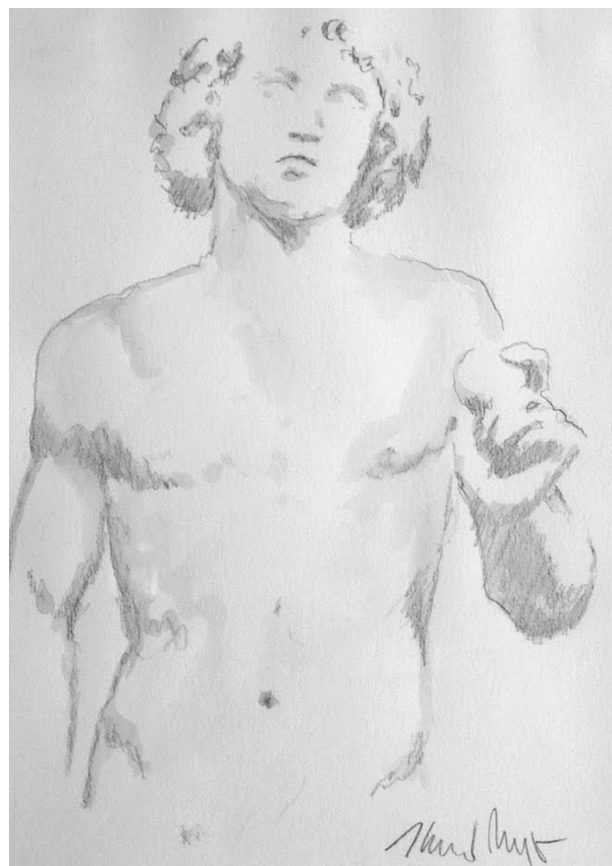
Spiritual School passes on to us, in mind. Then it may happen that a feeling of joy spontaneously arises in our heart. Does the idea of the divine past and the divine future, dormant in us, not evoke a deep awe in us, and simultaneously also a deep longing?

This longing from our innermost being reaches us from the distant origin of the microcosm, as a reflection in the heart of our microcosmic soul, as the shreds of a memory of its aeons-long wanderings.

**THE TWO THAT BECOME ONE** If we speak of the human being as we know him, we actually only see a shadow of the original human being. However, the image of the higher being is still buried in the microcosm, and therefore also in us, in the human personality, because it is linked with our heart, with our own source of life.

Thus we see that two centres are linked: the remnant of the original human being and its image in the microcosm. These two will ultimately merge into one scintillating nucleus of original life. From this merging of both streams, one pure, clear stream is formed, in which the diamond of inner being, covered by earthly matter for so long, becomes visible again. The purifying stream washes away all mud; the Light is able to reach the pearl and the wondrous jewel will begin to sparkle and radiate.

The Gnostics spoke about the invaluable pearl; the ancient Rosicrucians spoke about 'the



treasure of the wondrous jewel'. All of us are bearers of this wondrous jewel! What is the character of those who possess this jewel, of those who cherish this inner knowledge with all their love? They are marked ones. They bear the sign of predestination. They are called ones.

Why does the Rosycross call this jewel an invaluable treasure? It is because, when this jewel is found and is liberated from life in gross matter and the Light achieves its wondrous lustre, seven brilliant rays of Light are reflected in it and spring up as if from a source, awakened by the seven rays of the Seven-Spirit. Subsequently, these seven vibrations cause a reaction in the seven fields of life of the microcosm. They wake up and herald the re-creation of the microcosm. In the symbolic language of the Rosycross, it is then said that the sevenfold, divine atom unfolds.

The personality, the human being who devotes himself to this, experiences a profound change, a transfiguration. He wholly changes; and,

taken up into the development of the sevenfold microcosm, which becomes ever freer and more conscious, he will go up into the original life.

Therefore, the Rosicrucians take as their point of departure:

- there is an outward human being, a material human being, an earthly human being,
  - and there is the inner human being, the transparent soul of the complex microcosm.
- The inner being is buried in the outward being. The inner human being can be generated from the outward human being, as the true awakening. This is the aim of our existence. However deeply hidden, the treasure, the pearl, is present!

The inner human being and the outward human being are indissolubly linked. Now is the time that they are able to continue together consciously. This is possible when the outward human being prepares his inner being as a temple, in which the re-creating Light of the Gnosis can be active. A new wealth, a treasure of knowledge and longing is then linked with both. Those who are conscious of this know that they are safe in the Spiritual School as in the 'House Sancti Spiritus', in the house where a liberating spirit brings healing. In it, they pave a way to the innermost essence of the original field of life with the help of the Seven-Light. What is outward is dissolved in inner being, and the absolute rebirth is realised. ☸

# mary magdalene and the light

The fact that in our time, Mary Magdalene comes to the fore so often has everything to do with the growing consciousness of the seeking human being. Mary's image as confidante and even lover of Jesus refers to a double relationship: that of pupil-teacher as well as that of mutual affection and love of what is higher for the striving person and vice versa. Regardless of how much literature deals with their possibly outward, material history, he who truly reads, will immediately experience that we are dealing with symbolic language, symbolic images, and far-reaching insights.

**B**oth Mary Magdalene as well as Jesus refers to the soul. One is the yearning, pure, dynamic, seeking soul, the other one, Jesus, is the soul that belongs to a world that is intact and unspoiled.

What, then, is the message of this fascinating figure, Mary Magdalene, for our time? This has to do with her relationship to Jesus. Did these two celebrate a wedding? The significance of this question may be explained in the sense of the quote from the Acts of John. Every human being is able to celebrate a very special wedding. In the mysteries of the various religions, this is called the 'holy wedding'. It is the inner union of the soul, the bride, with the divine Other One, the divine beloved. In our time, this wisdom of the mysteries surfaces again. We are stimulated to take the next step in our consciousness.

In the gnostic Gospel of Philip, found at Nag Hammadi in 1945, we can read: 'The Sacrament of Marriage is grand... The existence of man is based upon mankind, yet mankind is based upon matrimony. Therefore, contemplate the Pure Mating, for it has great power!' In the Gospel of Philip, the bridal room is used as a metaphor for the union of the male aspect, the divine Spirit, with the female aspect, the human soul, in every man or woman. The relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene symbolises this link. The wholeness, the merging of the polarities, is generated by it.

Mary Magdalene is the symbol of a soul that walks this path. It has met the Saviour, has fol-

lowed his path and merges with him. The holy marriage is the ultimate goal of being human. Mary Magdalene stems from the Christian tradition. However, she also has sisters in other religions. Islam knows, among other things, the love between Layla and Majnun. Many Sufi masters have imitated this love as the inner path. In Judaism, the Song of Songs of Solomon resounds. It begins with the words: 'O that you would kiss me with the kisses of your mouth! For your love is better than wine.' (Song of Songs 1:2)

The Kabala, the Jewish mysticism, knows the mysteries of the holy marriage. The divine emanations flow out of the so-called tree of the Sephiroth. They are embodied in the human being who prepares for them like a bride. They are 'the love, that is better than wine'. These ideas abound in gnostic thought. Gnosis means insight into the meaning of higher consciousness. Our true identity is revealed by the flaring up of an inner Light, which shows us the way to the divine primordial image. This image is wholly revealed in the holy marriage. In this way, the Gospel of Philip says: 'The Lord loved Maria (in another way) than all the other Disciples, and he kissed her often.' Jesus compared Mary to the seer who sees the Light that has come. Behind the image of Mary

**Arrival in Marseille. Illustration from a manuscript from 1476 of the Magdalene Guild in Bruges, in which the story of Mary Magdalene's stay in Provence is related**

## SYMBOLS AND FAR-REACHING INSIGHTS





Mary Magdalene was a great initiate, because the divine being 'man' was generated in her

Magdalene, the archetype of the human soul works. It changes from the mortal, feminine aspect into the eternal feminine. This development is accomplished in our inner being. The Gospel of Mary Magdalene says: 'Beware that no one lead you astray saying: Lo here or lo there! For the Son of Man is within you. Follow after Him! Those who seek Him will find Him.'

Mary Magdalene was a great initiate, because the divine being 'man' was generated in her. In The Dialogue of the Saviour, an early-Christian manuscript from the Nag Hammadi codices, she clearly speaks as a woman who knows everything. It explains the relationship between the cosmos and the beginning of the liberating path.

'Mary said: 'Thus with respect to "the wickedness of each day", and "the labourer is worthy of his food", and "the disciple resembles his teacher". She uttered this as a woman who had understood completely.

The disciples said to him: 'What is the fullness, and what is the deficiency?' He said to them: 'You are from the fullness, and you dwell in the place where the deficiency is. And lo! His light has poured down upon me!' [...]

Judas said: 'Tell me, Lord, what the beginning of the path is.' He said: 'Love and goodness. For if one of these existed among the archons, wickedness would never have come into existence.' ☆

# mary magdalene, the world soul in the human being

Gnostic Christianity knows a cosmic coherence. This is not surprising, because the knowledge of a divine nature order that surrounds and pervades our world, belongs to the deeper insight of the soul. What is our relationship to this ideal world, the world of the creative cause?

In a moment of enlightenment, it may become clear to a person that there are two different spheres of life and that there are paths that link them. We may experience the gospels – and certainly the intact texts discovered in Egypt – as a living power, as a bridge between both worlds. However, centuries before the Christ appeared, great seers, founders of religions and philosophers, already saw how the span of the bridge was formed ‘from above’. And time and again, there was the task of bringing the construction of the bridge to a good end ‘from below’.

**THE WORLD SOUL** In his *Timaeus*, Plato calls the energy of the coherence of both worlds the world soul. He says that the creator of the all wanted creation to be equal to him as much as possible. He put the mind into a soul and the soul into a body and thus, he built the universe with them in order to see perhaps the most beautiful and best work completed in a natural way. In this way, the body of the world was created as a living being. However, he planted the soul in its centre and spread it over the whole universe, also clothing the world bodies with it. And Plato continues that the world soul is not only a part of the world body, but also of the mind and the harmony of the pure world of thought of what eternally is. Therefore, the world soul is a connecting link, consisting of beings that should fulfil a very important task in it, because a ‘fall’ occurred in the created world. A separation from the

original world took place. We experience this in our consciousness that, after all, has been separated from the divine field.

**THE GOSPEL OF MARY** If we now speak about Mary Magdalene, we speak about the path of the soul that returns to the original, pure nature. It has understood that our world and our state no longer correspond to the divine creation. This is why it seeks the origin of life and it is given a helping hand. It finds the path of cleansing, purification and change, the path of return. It is a prototype for all who seek the way.

Mary Magdalene is a soul to whom light, love and life, the threefold primordial principle in her heart, become clear. We also know this principle as the threefold formula of the fire of pure Christianity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

In the present time, we wonder where the feminine aspect is here. Where do we find the feminine principle in the process of change, the new creation of man? In our time, the mother of life appears from behind the veil. In 1945, a treasure of gnostic manuscripts was discovered in Nag Hammadi, Egypt. The Gospel of Philip explains that the Holy Spirit is the mother, the generative field of energy, active in both the divine nature as well as in our world. She manifests herself to our consciousness as the primordial prana, the holy ether or breath of the living soul. Is it not high time that we, in addition to the Father and the Son,



Carlo Crivelli, Mary Magdalene. Detail of the right altar panel in Santa Lucia dell'Aso, Italy, around 1485

also discover the Mother of all life? Let us assume that the regenerating power, the living breath in the universe, is the Mother of life. She has many daughters in all human cultures. Just think of the Egyptian Isis or the Greek Sophia.

One of her daughters is closely linked to spiritual Christianity, the Christian gnos̄is and our present time. That is Mary Magdalene, the soul that opens itself to the Spirit through inner reversal. 'In a world I was saved from an(other) world, and in a 'type', from a higher 'type' and from the fetter of the impotence of

knowledge, the existence of which is temporal...' This is one of the verses from the Gospel of Mary (Magdalene).

The Gnostics consider her a high initiate in the mysteries of the Light. In the tradition of the church, she was first of all the sinner who was liberated by Jesus from seven 'evil spirits'. The gnostic texts that have not been included in the New Testament, but also the Gospel of John, describe her as a courageous soul figure who raises herself from the world of illusion to the sun of the Spirit, just as the bud of a lotus clears a way through the mud to unfold completely in the sunlight. Mary Magdalene is the soul who turns away from nature and focuses on the inner mystery of the eternal life that she encounters in the Saviour. She becomes an initiate in the mysteries of the Light on her way to surrender to the Spirit and she is appreciated so highly that her fellow pupils (the apostles) call her: 'the woman who knows the all!' Mary Magdalene was the woman 'from whom seven devils had been cast out' – a clear metaphor of the sevenfold initiation, by which a human soul is received in the glorious pleroma again. Seven seals were broken by the Light. Creation occurred in seven days; the seven new lights are ignited in seven stages. The 'Gospel of Mary' is a profoundly esoteric text. After all, its core is formed by a revelation of Jesus about his soul that arises through the heavenly spheres – revelations that could only be understood by initiates, or by those striving for initiation.

Because the first six pages of the manuscript are missing, the text begins in the middle of a conversation between the resurrected Jesus and his pupils. After his ascension, the pupils stay behind grieving, but Mary then tells them about a vision that she had and comforts them.

**INTUITIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUL** In the Gospel of the Pistis Sophia, Jesus tells her: 'Mary Magdalene, you highly favoured one,

## Because we ourselves are broken, and not ‘whole’, we are hardly aware that our material world exists in a broken reality

I will initiate you into all mysteries of the Light.’ She becomes a ‘radiation of the world soul’, emanated to straying people and encouraging them to go the way back. The stages of her way make themselves felt in the collective memory of humanity. Her ‘ray’ also pervades our current world, in which the human ego with its experiments, calculations and speculations, with its materialistic science and its technocracy, has caused great coldness. Mary Magdalene’s ‘ray’ offers relief. Strengthened and actualised by all who walk the same path, it penetrates the abnormal, diseased aspect of our society. With its ‘knowledge of the all’, it irradiates the soul-killing aspect of our time and society, and touches those people who approach the silence and are able to listen in silence. This ray is like a call that emanates: ‘Turn inwardly. The heart of the all vibrates in your heart as a divine spark!’

A few fragments from the Gospel of Mary (Magdalene) illustrate this intuitive knowledge of the soul.

‘... Will matter then be destroyed or not?’ This is how the first fragment begins. ‘The Saviour said: ‘All natures, all formed things, all creatures exist in and with one another, and will again be resolved into their own roots. For the nature of matter is dissolved into the roots of its nature alone. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.’

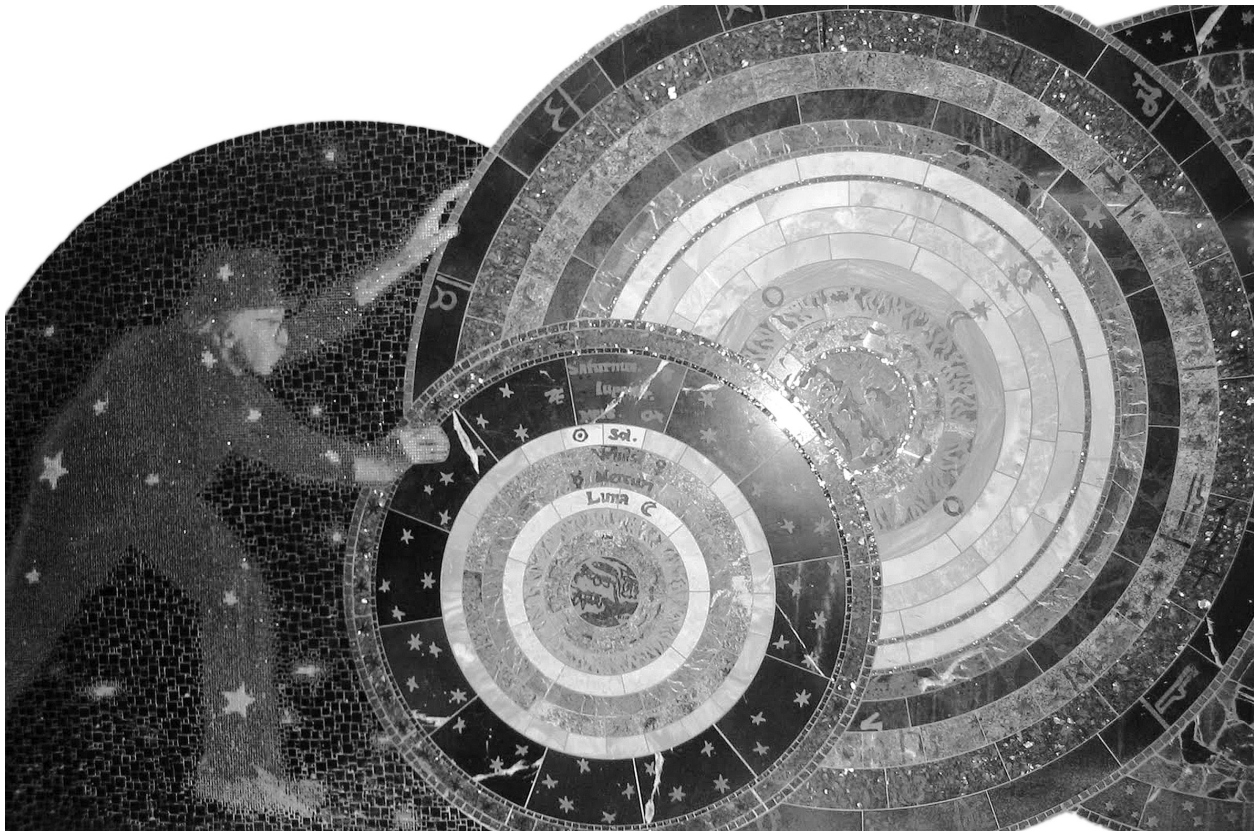
Peter said to him: ‘Since you have explained everything to us, tell us this also: What is the

sin of the world?’ The Saviour said: ‘There is no sin, but it is you who make sin when you do the things that are like the nature of adultery, which is called ‘sin’. That is why the Good came into your midst, to the essence of every nature in order to restore it to its root. That is why you become sick and die, for you are deprived of the one who can heal you. [...] Beware that no one lead you astray saying: ‘Lo here or lo there!’ For the Son of Man is within you. Follow after Him!’

As modern people, we know that all matter is energy, vibration. However, because we ourselves are broken, and not ‘whole’, we are hardly aware that our material world exists in a broken reality. It has been ignited in a bipolar willing that is separated from the Spirit. The material world, our world, is marked by the loss of the centre. On all fronts, wilfulness rules, which ignores the unity with the Spirit. In this way, our nature, which is separated from the Spirit, adapts to suffering and coincidence.

However, nowadays, there are many people who would like to make the Spirit their centre again, leaving the years of dogmatic Christianity and the hard training of the mental thinking behind. However, they lack the living soul power, the breath of the mother of all life, stemming from the heart.

**UNITY OF ACTION** He who wants to find the centre, will abandon the world of wilfulness that rotates within him around the axis



Mosaic 'Awakening of the soul of the world'

of futility. He will give his life meaning by linking himself again with the centre. This is also the reason why the divine world soul appears in our (inner) centre as the Only Good. It offers us a new link, so that we will be able to decide the great battle between light and darkness. We abandon the fragmentary life; in everything, we seek unity of action. We turn to our lost centre, the breath of the mother of all life, the Holy Spirit in the heart. This is the centre of the all, from which the soul can one day receive the liberating Light. It is the goal of the reversal, to which Mary Magdalene calls people, because she has experienced this path, and has walked it, too.

On this basis, we focus our attention on the events described in the biblical gospels with respect to Mary Magdalene. We saw that the fragments in Luke 8:2 and Mark 16:9, concerning the casting out of the demons and the liberation from the seven mortal sins, are a metaphor for the sevenfold sunken state of humanity, expressed in the quality of the

blood, that is, the natural consciousness. Here, Mary Magdalene is the human being who understands the imprisonment of her soul and yearns for liberation. We will also understand why, in the Gospel of Luke, Mary Magdalene, different from the more pragmatic Martha, prefers to sit quietly at the feet of the Lord. Touched by the light of insight, she listens, in complete self-surrender, to the eternal wisdom, the Gnosis. By such self-surrender, stemming from silence and simplicity of the heart, the Saviour loves her and loves her more than the other disciples, as we can read in the Gospel of Philip. In this way, Jesus says that the surrender of the soul to the Spirit is the only thing necessary for its liberation.

In John 12:1-8, we read how Mary Magdalene anoints the feet of the Lord with precious nard oil and then dries them with her hair. This may be understood as a special metaphor. It represents the soul that becomes conscious of the profound meaning of the sacrifice of the Christ. By her insight, she reacts to the divine

## We experience this beautiful, symbolic language as a glimpse of the mystery of the Spirit-Soul, an event on a high level of life

sacrifice of love with complete self-surrender. Later in the story, we see how the Saviour repeats this ritual act of Mary Magdalene. During the Last Supper, he washes the pupils' feet. This is an exceptionally symbolic act that manifests the new covenant of love between God and man. '[...] Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.' (John 15:9,10) Mary Magdalene, who performs the act of her soul with profound understanding, becomes the example of a soul that serves the Spirit. Both her as well as Jesus' ritual form a timeless sign of a cosmic bond of love and service between the kingdom of the Spirit and fallen humanity that is time and again realised in every striving human being: a symbolic testimony of one's inner experience.

We now arrive at the profound meaning of the events during which Mary Magdalene stands before the empty tomb of her beloved master. She looks into the tomb – is a clearer image possible to represent an initiation into the mysteries of life? Inwardly, she is wholly changed. Unlike the two disciples who had been at the empty tomb before, Mary Magdalene sees the two angels, the two guardians. She, the soul that has turned around, experiences the first direct effects of divine energy that becomes active in her. However, she cannot yet grasp, perceive, behold, because if Mary turns around, she sees Jesus, but does not recognise him. The eyes of her soul cannot yet see sufficiently clearly in the radiant light

of the Spirit. Jesus helps her and says: 'Mary.' Once again, she turns around. Everything that is still of our world falls away and she wholly surrenders to the world of the Spirit. Thus, wholly going up into the divine recognition, she beholds the Resurrected One: Rabboni – Master.

We experience this beautiful, symbolic language as a glimpse of the mystery of the Spirit-Soul, an event on a high level of life that, in its beauty and simplicity, should not be explained with too many words. Here, too, it is true: 'Do not hold me', the words that the Resurrected One speaks to make it clear to Mary Magdalene that the ultimate unification cannot take place yet. But Mary's joy has no end. She hurries to the disciples to share her great joy with them. It is the heart that passes on what is unbelievable to the mind: the Lord has truly arisen. ☸

# put on the perfect man

The continuation of the Nag Hammadi Gospel of Mary Magdalene describes how the Resurrected One appears to the twelve disciples and gives them advice. If we are able to interpret these allegorical stories inwardly, we see how they refer to the breath of regeneration that will powerfully confirm the inner values of Christ in seeking human beings in the coming time.

‘Do not lay down any rules beyond what I appointed you, and do not give a law like the lawgiver lest you be constrained by it.’ When He had said this He departed. But they were grieved. They wept greatly, saying: ‘How shall we go to the Gentiles and preach the gospel of the Kingdom of the Son of Man? If they did not spare Him, how will they spare us?’ Then Mary stood up, greeted them all, and said to her brethren: ‘Do not weep and do not grieve nor be irresolute, for His grace will be entirely with you and will protect you. But rather, let us praise His greatness, for He has prepared us and made us into Men.’ When Mary said this, she turned their hearts to the Good, and they began to discuss the words of the Saviour. Every human being who has prepared himself for the Spirit will also receive its guidelines and advice. At the moment that he feels deserted by the Spirit during the daily course of events, he will lose his faith and his mental ego will begin to doubt. ‘I cannot do this!’ ‘Gnosis is incomprehensible!’ ‘I certainly do not want to be considered stupid!’ This attitude is understandable and even natural, because the intellectual human being is now confronted with an influence that means inspiration. Often it does not seem sensible at all, although he would very much like to add the command of the Christ to the rules imposed by his mind, if only to be, or to seem to be, certain. However, he becomes confused. How would the mind be able to testify to the

Spirit? This is not possible. It would have a forced effect; it would remain imitation. Not until the pure intuition of the soul, a stream of ‘knowledge’ of the faith arises from the heart, is this new ‘knowledge’ able to ‘fulfil’ the old thinking. The new soul consciousness, Mary Magdalene, clears away the fear and the doubt (by wholly filling them with Light). And this radical union of heart and head immediately and unreservedly means living, acting and testifying to Him through the word of the Spirit. ‘Peter said to Mary: ‘Sister we know that the Saviour loved you more than the rest of woman. Tell us the words of the Saviour which you remember, which you know, but we do not, nor have we heard them.’ Mary answered and said: ‘What is hidden from you I will proclaim to you.’ And she began to speak to them these words: ‘I,’ she said, ‘I saw the Lord in a vision and I said to Him: ‘Lord, I saw you today in a vision.’ He answered and said to me: ‘Blessed are you that you did not waver at the sight of Me. For where the mind is, there is the treasure.’ I said to Him: ‘Lord, how does he who sees the vision see it, through the soul or through the spirit?’ The Saviour answered and said: ‘He does not see through the soul nor through the spirit, but the mind that is between the two that is what sees the vision and it is.’

According to the explanations of J. van Rijkenborgh, Grandmaster and founder of the Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross, we should see the twelve disciples as symbols



**Illustration  
from the  
manuscript  
of the  
Magdalene  
Guild,  
Bruges, 1476**

of the different aspects of the consciousness. And therefore, if Mary Magdalene tells the disciples about a vision, they are 'indignant' to say the least. They want to elicit the deepest secrets from the soul. Why is 'this woman' so highly appreciated by the Lord, and they, who after all represent the consciousness, much less? Then the soul, Mary Magdalene, refers to a spiritual experience; it is a sudden recogni-

tion, deep in her soul, of the eternal countenance of the divine self. She asks whether it is the soul or the Spirit that beholds this? Neither, Jesus says, it is the new consciousness, the true Spirit-soul, that recognises itself as the link between the Spirit and the soul. With her vision, Mary Magdalene also wants to say that the mystery of self-knowledge links the soul with the Spirit of the resurrected

## Our heart is the greatest miracle: It contains a spiritual element, a powerful principle stemming from the divine nature

human being in a wholly different sense than would be possible in the human world. In this way, she, 'the woman who knows the all', shows to the disciples a truly enlightened soul state that coincides with the recognition of the divine all. This is why the text says: Such an experience is not limited to a single, chosen human being. It rather is a merciful gift to every heart that surrenders to the word of the Spirit, and perseveres until the wedding of the Spirit is finally celebrated during an 'alchemical wedding'.

Let us once again ask: Can our consciousness still be found in the chaos of roots under the earth? Does it still fight its way to a place between the thorny branches of the experiences of suffering in the midst of the world? Or did it already develop into the petals of the calyx that surround the bud, the still closed soul universe? Our heart is the greatest miracle. It contains a spiritual element, a powerful principle stemming from divine nature. The spiritual path consists of releasing the powers of this primordial atom.

The human being can only escape the flood of his wilful brain experiments, if he builds the arch of his soul; if he admits the high, spiritual powers – but not the emotions – of the heart, if he unconditionally entrusts himself to the plan of creation contained in it. Its lines of forces will grant the soul so much light that it can envelop itself with it. On this basis, it forms a structure with the help of which a human being is able to carry on in a sea of

ignorance and keep his soul alive!

The following fragment from the Gospel of Mary Magdalene deals with the spheres of fallen humanity, which the soul traverses, supported by its new 'light vesture'. 'And desire said: 'I did not see you descending, but now I see you ascending. Why do you lie since you belong to me?' The soul answered and said: 'I saw you. You did not see me nor recognise me. I served you as a garment and you did not know me.' When it said this, it (the soul) went away rejoicing greatly. Again it came to the third power, which is called ignorance. The power questioned the soul, saying: 'Where are you going? In wickedness are you bound. But you are bound; do not judge!' And the soul said: 'Why do you judge me, although I have not judged? I was bound, though I have not bound. I was not recognised. But I have recognised that the All is being dissolved, both the earthly things and the heavenly.' When the soul had overcome the third power, it went upwards and saw the fourth power, which took seven forms. The first form is darkness, the second desire, the third ignorance, the fourth is the excitement of death, the fifth is the kingdom of the flesh, the sixth is the foolish wisdom of flesh, the seventh is the wrathful wisdom. These are the seven powers of wrath. They asked the soul: 'Whence do you come slayer of men, or where are you going, conqueror of space?' The soul answered and said: 'What binds me has been slain, and what turns me about has been overcome, and





my desire has been ended, and ignorance has died. In an aeon I was released from a world, and in a Type from a type, and from the fetter of oblivion which is transient. From this time on will I attain to the rest of the time, of the season, of the aeon, in silence.' When Mary had said this, she fell silent, since it was to this point that the Saviour had spoken with her.' The soul-light vesture is like an ark, in which the human being can escape the modern flood and can pass the spheres of the world of anger and evil, described so strikingly. Through insight, reversal and self-surrender, new powers are released in us. Even if the influences and obsessions, stemming from this nature, try everything to hold on to the body (and the consciousness!) of this nature, in this way

obstructing the soul, there need not be fear, because they will no longer succeed. The new light vesture is the guarantee that it will be able to return to the kingdom of the Light, to the silence of eternity. It will stand in the midst of our world, while it experiences the mysterious state of being linked with a wholly different one. While experiencing this, Mary Magdalene, the soul, is silent.

When the disciples hear her vision, some of them react quite sceptically. Until the end, the aspects of the consciousness will possibly raise doubts in a human being. In the last fragment of the Gospel, it is clearly shown that the soul, which testifies to spiritual experiences via its intuitive soul consciousness, will be incited to

doubt by the mind. This involves a difficult situation for it.

'But Andrew answered and said to the brethren: 'Say what you wish to say about what she has said. I at least do not believe that the Saviour said this. For certainly these teachings are strange ideas.' Peter answered and spoke concerning these same things. He questioned them about the Saviour: 'Did He really speak privately with a woman and not openly to us? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did He prefer her to us?'

Then Mary wept and said to Peter: 'My brother Peter, what do you think? Do you think that I have thought this up myself in my heart, or that I am lying about the Saviour?'

Levi answered and said to Peter: 'Peter you have always been hot tempered. Now I see you contending against the woman like the adversaries. But if the Saviour made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Saviour knows her very well. That is why He loved her more than us. Rather let us be ashamed and put on the perfect Man, and separate as He commanded us and preach the gospel, not laying down any other rule or other law beyond what the Saviour said.' And when they heard this, they began to go forth to proclaim and to preach.'

Are we still able to perceive the subtle, pure and lively aspect of the soul in our intellectually oriented world? Currently, numerous people find themselves in the nadir of their course through the world and yearn for perspective,

Light, and renewal of the soul. The divine world soul, the Christ, wants to find a channel in humanity, because the time of the cosmic harvest has arrived.

Now, everyone is able to seize the saving anchor in the heart with his free will. Will next generations also escape the modern flood, which will certainly lie on the psychological plane, too, in a newly built ark?

In his explanation of the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, Jan van Rijckenborgh answers this question.

He says that during the coming world revolution, women will have a specific sensitivity to receive the new cosmic radiations in the heart. Despite fierce resistance, they will be a strongly driving force. By their efforts, they will be able to break the intellectual delusion, so that humanity can renew itself on the basis of the heart. Both poles, man and woman, can bring the special goal of the new period of true human genesis closer through their reversal and soul renewal.

In the 'power of the reversal', they can follow the path of Mary Magdalene. In the coming time, the world soul, the breath of regeneration, will ever more powerfully confirm the inner values of Christ. ✨

# resurrection in the light vesture

We live in a body. If everything is all right, it passes on feelings of happiness and pleasure. If its processes are disturbed, we feel ill. We are often faced with it, also on the level of the soul. It makes us feel present in the world and gives us the sensation that we are there. We use it to present, emphasise and develop ourselves. Therefore, it is not surprising that our consciousness is formed by it. If we say 'I' to ourselves, we usually refer to the person, to whom this body belongs. Because it is subject to time, it is also subject to wear and tear and it will ultimately disappear completely.

**T**hat is particularly uncomfortable for our consciousness; it causes a crisis. If we are asked whether we are still there after our death, we become uncertain.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says: 'Leave the dead to bury their own dead.' This sounds strange, if we keep in mind that this refers to people who still live in their current body. To us, it seems that they are still alive! Plato says the same in his dialogue 'Gorgias': 'Perhaps we are indeed dead, for once I heard one of our sages say that we are now dead and that our body is a tomb [...] and he compared our soul to a vessel full of holes, because it can never be satisfied...' And we read in the Gospel of Philip: 'A Gentile does not die, for he has never lived in order that he may die.'

Are these statements that we can confirm from our own experience? Did we ever have the sensation that we are actually dead in our body? That the ever-recurring accidents, the many events leading to a person's death only show that death was present in us from the beginning and that our life cannot be true life?

**EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY BODIES** We read in the Bible that Jesus was resurrected. This occurred in another body. Paul says about this in the First Letter to the Corinthians: 'But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. For not all flesh is alike, but there is one kind for men, another for animals, another for birds, and another for

fish. There are celestial bodies and there are terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another...' (1 Cor. 15:38-40)

On this basis, the resurrection in a heavenly body takes place. We call this the 'soul vesture'. It truly lives and does not contain death. It is clear that this also implies another state of consciousness. In the Gospel of Philip, we read: 'It is necessary to rise in this flesh, since everything exists in it.'

And: 'No one will be able to go in to the king if he is naked.'

The path 'to the king' is the path to the divine realm of life, a 'royal' state. We cannot go there 'naked', that is, without a body. Why not? Why do we need a body? Do the scriptures not say that God is pure spirit?

**CONSCIOUSNESS OF WHAT IS HEAVENLY** The question of why touches on the mystery of creation. In the writings of many mystics and Gnostics, we read that the universal Spirit becomes conscious of its own divine fullness through its creatures. Through them, it begins the process of creation that has many stages. During these stages of gaining consciousness, accompanied by change, the creatures grow towards the primordial deity, who sojourns in immovable being. Each of the levels of consciousness has a corporality belonging to it, because the consciousness emanates from a structured being that mirrors the spiritual aspect.

## The Gospel of Philip calls for the creation of a heavenly body

The Gospel of Philip calls for the creation of a heavenly body. We can only feel attracted by it, if we acknowledge the power of death in this world in everything that lives, if we notice how the worm eats away the fruit from within, and if we presume the fear in the depth.

‘There is a rebirth and an image of rebirth,’ we read. We, mortal people, are the reflection of what is immortal. ‘It is certainly necessary to be born again through the image. But what is rebirth and what is its image? The resurrection is achieved through the image.’

In this way, a relationship is established between our state of being and the one to which we are called. In other writings, we are called image bearers. The Gospel of Thomas speaks of twins. It is our task to enable the resurrection for the Other One, the original one, whose vague image we are. We are able to do so because, as images, we have a certain resemblance to the Other One, the spiritual twin. With the help of our structure, the original one, the inner Other One, is able to find the way, on which he can develop. This is what is special in gnostic Christianity. What above all matters is the resurrection.

‘It is necessary that we put on the living man,’ we can read in the Gospel of Philip. The same is written in Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians:

‘[...] and put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God.’

This refers to a real possibility. We can enable the great event. It seems something unusual to us, something that makes a pagan impression. We are used to cooperate in a project, but we can also work on ourselves. We can change our behaviour. But our resurrection? Is this not an overestimation of ourselves? Is it not something that is ‘forbidden’? In gnostic writings and also in many statements in the New Testament, this way is discussed quite soberly. They prompt us to a consciousness that dissociates from the identification with the current body and that turns to the light powers emanating from the inner being.

In ‘The treatise on the Resurrection (of Rheginus)’, also belonging to the discoveries in Nag Hammadi, we can read: ‘No one should doubt that, if the visible figure is dead, it will not be preserved, and that only the living figure contained in it will be resurrected. What, then, is the resurrection? It is always the manifestation of the Resurrected One.’

According to these words, the immortal figure is buried within us. What matters is to offer it the possibility to manifest itself, to become



visible. Jesus has exemplified this way. He has developed the living figure, hidden behind his mortal figure, to the size that it deserves. He brought forth the soul being that is linked with the divine Spirit, and which we call spirit-soul being. The miracles and the many other stories in the biblical gospels testify to this in a graphic way. Jesus left the mortal figure behind in the newly generated body. We read that the tomb, the earthly body, was empty, which means that the spirit-soul figure had finally liberated itself from it. This makes it clear that an immortal body must be developed before the death of the mortal body. It is not the case, as has been thought throughout

the ages, that Jesus' dead body (that after all was mortal) was raised again. And the Gospel of Philip says about this: 'Those who say that the Lord died first and then rose up are in error. [...] If one does not first attain the resurrection, he will not die.'

Initially, Jesus' disciples were unable to see him in his heavenly figure. Only Mary Magdalene was able to do so. With its limited sensory organs, the old corporality, the image, can only see in a limited way. However, Jesus' disciples also followed his way. They had remained loyal to him and had concentrated on inner change. Therefore, after some confusion and uncertainty, they were also able to perceive the Resurrected One. In them, the spiritual body had reached a certain level of development. A new sensitivity of the sensory organs had developed. Therefore, the words 'Having eyes you do not see' no longer applied to the disciples at the time of Jesus' resurrection. In the Gospel of Philip, this is confirmed by the following words:

'It is not possible for anyone to see anything of the things that actually exist unless he becomes like them. This is not the way with man in the world: he sees the sun without being a sun; and he sees the heaven and the earth and all other things, but he is not these things. This is quite in keeping with the truth. But you saw something of that place, and you became those things. You saw the Spirit, you became spirit. You saw Christ, you became Christ. You saw the Father, you shall become Father. So in

this place you see everything and do not see yourself, but in that place you do see yourself – and what you see you shall become.’

With a consciousness that is one with the old body, we can with good reason deny the resurrection, because it cannot be ascertained with the sensory organs. The Greek word for resurrection, *anastasis*, also means awakening. The Gospel of Philip was originally written in Greek. An awakening in this sense has stages of growth.

**DYING IN WHAT IS IMMORTAL** The new spirit-soul structure is embedded in our life system as a germ, similarly as a big tree develops from a seed. If it is to grow, it needs nourishment and as ‘kingdom of the earth’ we should bring ourselves into a state, in which this growth becomes possible.

‘Man used to feed like the animals, but when Christ came, the perfect man, he brought bread from heaven in order that man might be nourished with the food of man.’ And we further read: ‘Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God.’ To what does this refer that cannot be inherited? And what will then be inherited? Well, what is of Jesus and also of his blood is what will be inherited. This is why he said: ‘He who shall not eat my flesh and drink my blood has not life in him. What is it? His flesh is the word, and his blood is the Holy Spirit. He who has received these has food and he has drink and clothing.’

The food and the drink to which this re-

fers enable us to be ‘clothed’. The concept of ‘cloth’ refers to the heavenly body. It is decisive whether it becomes active. It is actually already present, but it is as if dead, just as an image with dead eyes. It wants to be stimulated to growth and awakening with love and understanding. This is an event that is related to the original mystery of creation. The stages of growth enable the divine Other One to see his inner wealth. He achieves complete consciousness of his significance. The victory over the nature of death grants him insight into life and the consciousness of his value as spirit-soul. We, mortal people, die on this path to the new being. This is a daily event. It gives certainty, solid ground. It forms ‘the great bird between whose wings we repose’. In each stage of its development, it is reflected in us. It conquers the space that was occupied by us until now. We receive a glimpse of its power. With it and with the wisdom arising from the inner process, we are able to continue our life in the conditions of this world.

How can we best assimilate the substances that are characterised by ‘word’, ‘Holy Spirit’, or ‘bread’ and ‘wine’?

In principle, they are omnipresent in the atmosphere of our earth. They are waiting for us to attune ourselves to them. Then we will be able to assimilate them. They might be compared to radio waves and we should attune them to the proper frequency with the help of receivers. The period that we have now entered offers us special possibilities to do

## Jesus' life is a shining symbol of the inner path and he has etched it into the atmosphere as 'information'

so. The sign of Aquarius is an 'air sign'. High spiritual energies make themselves more easily felt in the atmosphere than during preceding eras. It is said that a harvest is brought in. This is accompanied by the fact that everywhere in the world mystery wisdom enters the consciousness of people. They should receive an opportunity to become what they fundamentally are.

Jesus' life is a shining symbol of the path and he has etched it into the atmosphere as 'information'. Many people have followed him and have reinforced this information. It includes all processes of change of the earthly body and all stages of development of the body of the resurrection. Everything can be evoked as a pattern, as a model. In principle, it will, therefore, be possible for all people to weave, by their deeds and by their directedness, the garment of the soul as originally intended.

A gnostic community that maintains a special light field may then be a decisive help. Such a 'field' offers protection and is an incentive to walk the path that offers a perspective on success amidst the spectrum of energies by which we are surrounded and in which opposing forces play a large part.

Then the human being will experience this influence as a new ensoulment – and he derives confidence from it, and spiritual comprehension, which is more than solely understanding. Through this broadmindedness, he is able to transcend differences of opinion. He will increasingly be able to dissociate from all those things with which he identified until then; he simply loses interest in them. He can hazard to behave in new ways. Courageously, he enters an 'inner realm' that gradually opens to his consciousness.

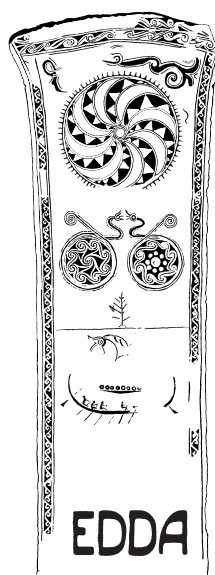
Light points open new ways of seeing; gnosis and inner knowledge, certainty, originate. Amidst the spectrum of the old forces of our diverse talents, the universal power 'crucifies' itself in us. To us, our efforts to identify with it are like a crucifixion. Giving up the old aspects of the will means darkness. The fiery play of thoughts and desires that we experienced until now disappear from our inner being. The space becomes dark. Many have spoken of nightly vigils. They are important, because faith grows through them. And from the night of what is old, the radiant light of the new morning rises.

In due course, the building will inevitably be



erected. The keystone will come from 'above'. The heavenly Other One finds himself. In the old body, he is present as new. He is like a field of Light that can expand infinitely, but that can also contract again. The old consciousness, so closely linked with the mortal shell, is dissolved into the new one. The Light nucleus still only uses the old shell. It has now rightly become 'a tool'. The curtain, which has hung before the inner sanctuary for so long, is torn.

In the Gospel of Philip, the joyful shout resounds: 'Those who are exalted above the world are indissoluble, eternal.' ✨



*Countless myths have been passed down to us from the most diverse cultural periods. They contain images of early humanity depicting the origin of the world, the activity of the forces of nature, gods and fate after death.*

## the story of creation

In the previous instalment of *The Edda* (Pentagram 3 2011), we saw that during the long evolution of man during his development on earth, the discovery of one's own will was a fascinating, but also terrifying experience for the young ego. For the first time, he was confronted with his task, his responsibility and the dangers of the path before him, which made a disconcerting impression. He saw Odin before him as the radiantly white helper, or as the bloodthirsty one, who instilled fear. The human being recognised his own divinity – but he was afraid of its great power. This is why he was a warrior: in battle, he was dauntless and learned to sacrifice himself in order to serve the greater whole. First of all, his home and hearth, then his tribe, his gods, his country, then humanity, then the deity who is everything in everyone – and in this way, ultimately the inner Odin.



In this way, the processes of the consciousness developed in the Germanic soul, but the prophetess saw much more – cosmic processes and eras. Volva links us with the primordial beginning. She describes the primordial chaos, from which the universe was formed during infinite periods of time.

Verse 3 reads:

*'Of old was the age  
when Ymir lived;  
sea nor cool waves  
nor sand there were;  
earth had not been,  
nor heaven above,  
but a yawning gap,  
and grass nowhere.'*

The prophetess beheld the results of spiritual impulses. In her mind's eye, she saw how the forces were polarised, how heat and cold, fire and ice formed the earth, as two poles that affect each other, as she tells in the Edda. Ultimately, forces woke up that formed bodies and that worked on the development of plants, animals and people. These uninterruptedly active nature forces of the form were the 'giants', by whom the prophetess was brought up. In a certain way, everyone might nowadays still be able to observe those forces within himself. The head with its cool thinking corresponds to the cold pole; the warm metabolism in the body, taking care of everything with energy, is the warm pole. The originally created giant



forces threatened to degenerate. To restrain them and to structure them so that those enormous energies would act in an ordered way, higher powers had to interfere to set matters straight. The Ase Wotan (later Odin) with his brothers Wili and Weh appeared. Here we

**Odin exiles Loki's children.**

**By the Danish artist Lorentz Frølich, 1906**



see the universal trinity interfere on a new level of life and link itself with the unbridled nature forces that prevail there.

The Edda explains how the three powers from Hlidskjalf, the seat of Odin from where he oversees the nine worlds, seek a way of de-

velopment through the realms of matter. They have entered the genesis and pass through various levels of change. There is no mention of an immovable existence of a spirit, standing opposite the genesis and accompanying it. The Asen gods also established order in the primordial chaos. The stars were assigned their place in the cosmos, the earth received its schedule, plants grew and great peace ruled in the first creation. Time and again, it is said that the gods were 'deliberating'. After everything had been created, the gods introduced a break in creation.

We read in verse 8:

*In their dwellings at peace  
they played at tables,  
of gold no lack  
did the gods then know,  
till thither came  
up giant-maids three,  
huge of might,  
out of Jotunheim.*

The concept of 'gold' may refer to happiness, wealth, to a golden age. But this ends, when 'three giant-maids' turn up, the daughters from the Thusrheim, from Jotunheim, the abode of the giants. Change dawned. Would a 'second creation history' now take place, similar to the biblical genesis? Is there a reference to a beginning of a new, great world era? The Asen initiated a new creative activity on an apparently much denser level.



Hermodur travels to Baldur in Hell, from an eighteenth-century, Icelandic manuscript of the Edda

The verses 17 and 18 read:

*Then from the throng  
did three come forth,  
from the home of the gods,  
the mighty and gracious;  
Two without fate  
on the land they found,  
Ask and Embla,  
empty of might.*

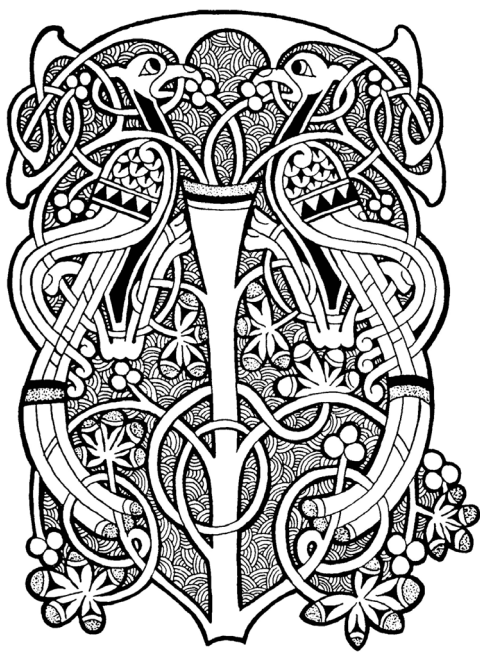
*Soul they had not,  
sense they had not,  
heat nor motion,  
nor goodly hue;  
Soul gave Odin,  
sense gave Hönir,  
heat gave Lothur  
and goodly hue.*

Ask and Embla should be seen as earlier developments, early stages of humanity, which originated during former world periods. They were still close to the vegetable and animal state and were cast on the ‘beach’ of a new period. The word beach may also symbolise the mainland. In addition to the tenuous ‘water’, denser structures were generated.

Ask and Embla originated from a primordial sea of dream consciousness. In a figure that adopts a more solid form, new possibilities of life may be evoked. People are determined by three energies.

Odin grants the breath of life: ‘breath, odem’, soul. Hönir grants the faculty of perception via the senses.

Lodir or Loki is the crafty one who grants life and the warm-blooded nature, but he is also the creator of the individual will and unbri-



In the Edda, the gods were engaged in a tremendous struggle in both man and nature. These are metaphors for never-ending processes of change in life

dled passions. Loki is the essence of being human: he enables the free choice between good and evil. In this context, it is important that he participated in the creation of the human being in the new world period from the beginning.

The second creation story from the Old Testament, which in our view concerns the same stage of the creation of man, describes the emergence of the individual will in a slightly different way. In Genesis 2:7, we read: 'Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.' The Old Testament myth speaks of the beguiling by 'the serpent', but it is nevertheless man who made the choice. His being expelled from Paradise means that he became alive in another realm, the earth-earthly, still linked

with the breath of God, but now in a new body: Adam and Eve were clothed with 'garments of skins' to cover their shame. Heavily influenced by the conservative, Christian faith, we speak of a fall, a guilt-ridden crime of the human being.

In the Edda, there is no expulsion from Paradise by a malevolent, vindictive deity, but it nevertheless speaks of violent and impetuous developments, initiated by the influences of higher energies. Here the gods were engaged in a tremendous struggle in both man and nature. This resulted in never-ending processes of change that people experienced as inner crises and in which they would initially be compelled to participate 'by the command of the deity', and in which they would later cooperate cheerfully. ✪



identity, personality and

# spirit nucleus

During the knowledge conference held at the conference centre for the youth and the young people of the Rosycross, Noverosa, in March 2011, a group of approximately 65 young people, under the age of 30, pupil, member or linked with the Rosycross in another way, gathered. By attending services, lectures and visiting knowledge booths, they not only sought deepening, but also a practical approach with regard to the problems involved in walking the path while fully standing in the turmoil of society; therefore, not only the philosophy, but also practical aspects were dealt with. Below follows a report about one of the themes which concerned spirituality and identity.

In one of the knowledge booths, a lively discussion took place, during which particularly the young people dominated the conversation. In eight rounds, with approximately eight young people, the topic 'spiritual identity' was always the central issue.

The idea was always threefold:

- First, an orientation on the concept of identity: what do you think of when hearing this word; do you have or are you an identity?
- Then the quest for your identity. It was said that this is really something for teenagers and people in their twenties, but had older people actually found this identity already?
- This was followed by a session that went more deeply into this, by a discussion about an ancient, gnostic symbol that might, by its simplicity, clarify the complex theme in a powerful way.

At least, this was the initial idea. However, it often appeared during the first orientation on the concept of identity that the whole group spontaneously achieved deeper insights. This was probably also caused by the fact that a number of young people also help prepare and cooperate in these and similar themes for other occasions in the Spiritual School. It is a joy to experience this.

In this context, there was the clear conclusion that we absolutely have a certain identity, proof of which is the identity card we should always carry with us once we turn 14. We have a Social Security number and we have a

digital ID. It makes us unique and legitimate; although this is not something that we are, it is what we have. Where, then, do concepts like 'personality' and the 'I' fit in? Personality, the participants stated, is a role that we can play, a mask that we can exchange for another one, depending on our surroundings, our mood, and our goal. It is also something that we can polish and it is, therefore, not the innermost and most essential aspect of our being. This is why there is something or someone within us, a motivator, which may determine and change our outward manifestation.

The inner being was seen as one of the most important aspects of our 'true' identity, together with our being unique and autonomous. Here we are confronted with reality, because what do we see if we look a bit more closely at ourselves? This question is certainly not limited to young people. Above all, we are occupied with the outside, with what we see and how we are seen. It is mainly the senses, ours as well as those of others around us, which are at work. What, then, is the inner being? We derive our identity from matters that are not unique: our nationality, our sex, our faith, and our peers. We belong to a group and we want to be accepted by it. What, then, is unique? And on what are the choices we make based? We often choose what our parents want for us, our friends, our teachers, or society. We give in to the image that others have of us, or that we would like others to have of us. We satisfy the expectations of our environment.

*'For he who does not exist  
has no name.  
For what name  
is given to him  
who does not exist?  
[...]  
Therefore, he did not receive the name on loan,  
as do others, according to the form  
in which each one is to be produced.  
But this is the proper name.  
There is no one else who gave it to him.  
But he is unnamable, indescribable,  
until the time when he who is perfect spoke of him alone.  
And it is he who has the power  
to speak his name, and to see it.  
When, therefore, it pleased him that his name,  
which is loved, should be his Son,  
and he gave the name to him, that is, him  
who came forth from the depth,  
he spoke about his secret things,  
knowing that the Father is a being without evil.'*

The Gospel of Truth

What, then, is autonomous?

Do we really make the choices that we would also make on the basis of our innermost essence? After some reflection, we were soon able to draw the conclusion that we do not actually pay too much attention to the characteristics that would turn us into a true identity, namely inward, unique and autonomous. This raised the question: Do we actually want to be an identity, or is having an identity enough? Is inventing ourselves, being able to be and remain ourselves, and in this way closing the door to all other 'selves' that we might be, the end of the quest for our identity?

The early-Christian Gnostic, Clemens of Alexandria, wrote: 'The greatest of all lessons is knowing yourself, because if a person knows himself, he knows God'. And this brings us to the question that young people, of course, also asked the leaders of the conference: Did you, that is, those over 30, find your identity? In other words, had they already found their identity, or were they still seeking, too? Or had they prematurely stopped seeking? This question stuck, and there were those amongst the leaders who were unable to give a satisfactory answer to this question during this knowledge

weekend for young people.

They were probably saved by the third part of the topic: The symbol that was used by the early-Christian Gnostics in the context of this question. The human being may be represented as a circle with a centre and a radius that connects these two. The circumference is the outside and represents the physical body, our external self. The radius represents our soul, the psyche, the deeper layer of our being. In the centre, we find our fundamental being, which they called pneuma or the Spirit. This centre is sometimes also called the consciousness.

In the *Gospel of Thomas*, Jesus says:

*'I will give you what no eye has seen,  
what no ear has heard,  
what no hand has touched,  
what has not arisen in the human heart.'*

And Paul says to Jesus: 'You are my consciousness.'

Hermes explains:

*'What sees and hears in you, is the Logos of the Lord. It is the consciousness of God the Father.'*

We might see the soul as the power to identify with something, as an identifying power, as a point on a radius, lying between the centre and the circumference. And this power, which is part of our being, is therefore able to identify with the circumference of the circle, the outside, or with the centre. Each of us finds

ÉTAT FRANÇAIS  
**CARTE D'IDENTITÉ** N° [redacted]

Nom : .....  
 Prénoms : .....  
 Domicile : .....  
 Profession : .....  
 Né le : .....  
 à ..... Dépt. ....  
 fil de .....  
 et de .....  
 Nationalité .....  
 Signature du titulaire, .....  
 Empreinte digitale [redacted]

Photographie [redacted]

TIMBRE FISCAL  
 13 FRANCS

**SIGNALEMENT**  
 Taille .....  
 Visage .....  
 Teint .....  
 Cheveux .....  
 Moustache .....  
 Front .....  
 Yeux .....  
 Nez .....  
 Bouche .....  
 Menton .....  
 Signes particuliers .....

**Changements de Domicile**  
 Timbre humide .....  
 Timbre humide .....

27 FEV 1943  
 Le Commissaire de Police  
 ayant apposé la carte  
 POLICE REGIONALE D'ETAT DE  
 Commissariat Croix Noire

578

himself with this power somewhere between these two extremes. The quest for our identity has, therefore, two sides. On the outside, we can find many roles and the quest may continue forever, to another point on the circumference. An inner quest can ultimately only end in one point: in the Spirit, in the divine. How do we see ourselves? Are we a body, a manifestation, into which a soul has been placed and which, during the embryonic stage, has been linked with a spirit or spark of the spirit?

Or are we consciousness that is able to gain experience through the soul, into which a temporary body has been placed, by which sensory perception becomes possible?

With which portrayal of man do we identify? Do we recognise ourselves in this identifying power? The more our consciousness turns to the centre, the more we experience of this identity, this autonomy, the essence. Hermes says:

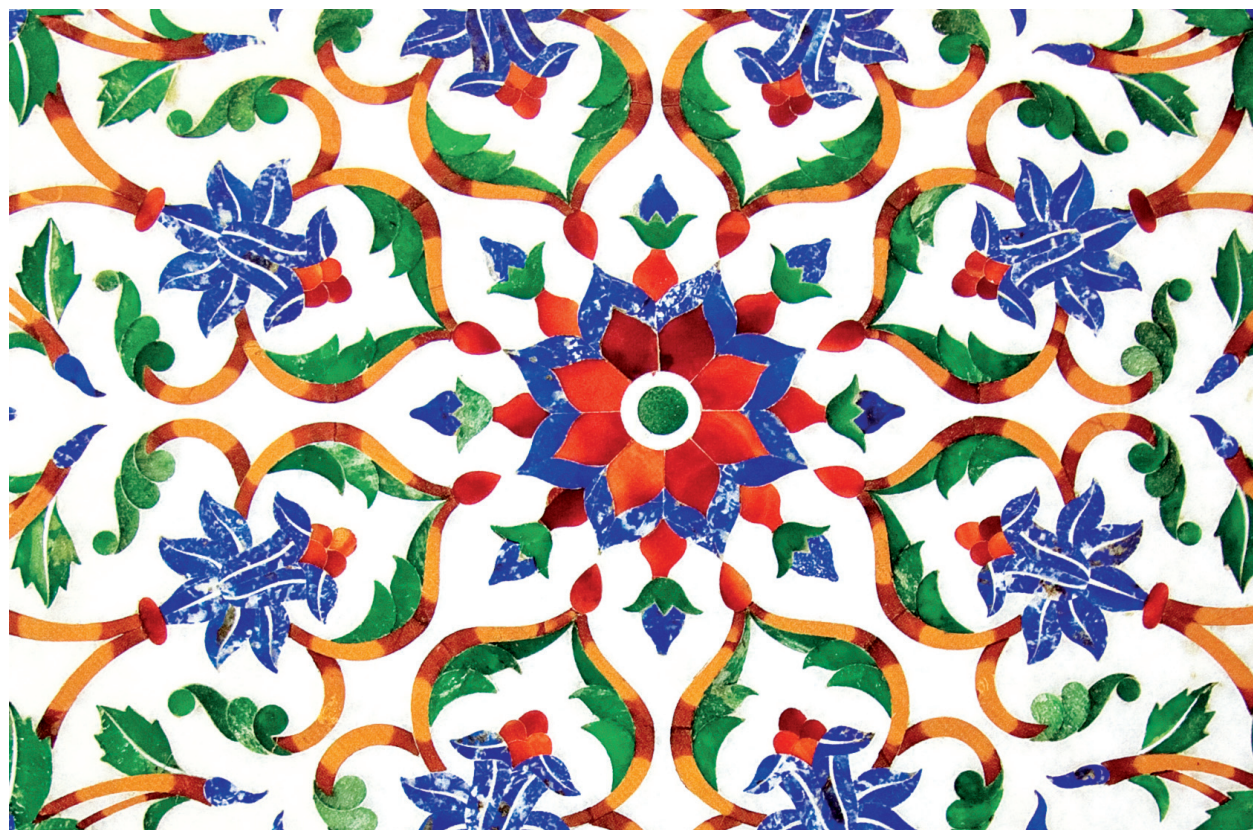
‘You have grown forth, O Soul, from a certain tree trunk; and of that tree you are a branch. However far the branch may go forth

from its trunk, there is still connection and contact between trunk and branch, whereby every branch seeks nutriment from its trunk, [...] Meditate on this, O Soul, and be assured that you are destined to return to your Creator, who is the trunk out of which you have grown.’

As always, Hermes addresses us as soul human beings. If we want to see it in this way, we are a branch on the tree alongside many other branches. And all of them are members of the body of Christ. All of them are the light rays that emanate from the Saviour. In this way, we can also see the expansion of the abovementioned symbol before us: a wheel with many spokes around a central axis, the trunk. Humanity consists of this central point of consciousness, from which or in which experience is generated in as many bodies. The young people formulated this insight as follows: Our most essential identity, the spiritual consciousness, corresponds to the most essential aspect of all other souls.

It contains the promise of what is universal, what is identical in every identity. Are we able to surpass the individual consciousness? ‘State of consciousness is state of life.’ How true and profound is this statement. Time and again, J. van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri have drawn our attention to it.

How do we gain insight into the effect of the three aspects of our being: Insight into the

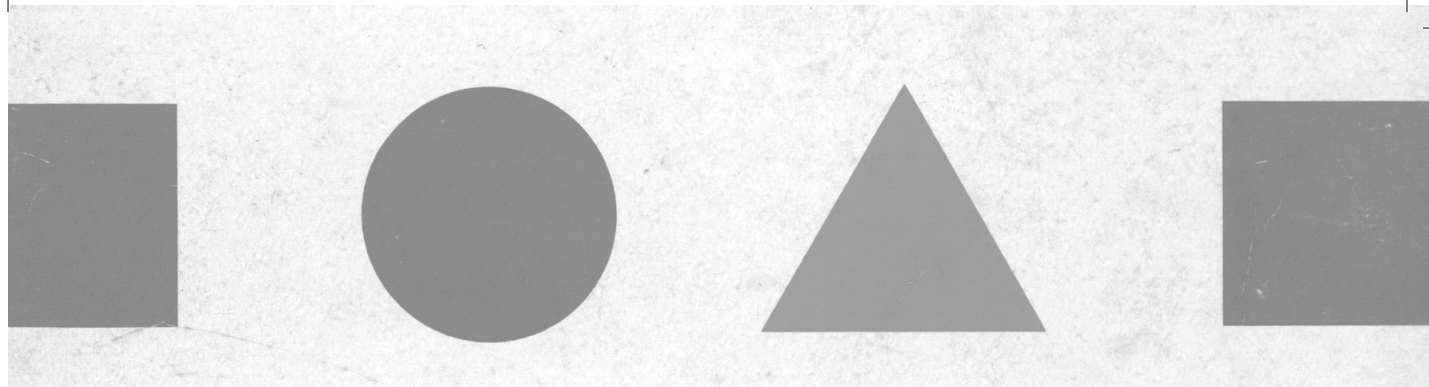


spiritual identity that we are, the identifying power of the soul that we sometimes experience, and the external identity that we have? The young people stated that illumination is the merging of our identifying power with our spiritual nucleus. From this spiritual nucleus, the light and the vibration continuously pervade our being. May we be conscious of it, without the deception of the senses! In the Gospel of Truth, Valentinus describes this beautifully as the Breath or the fragrance of the Father.

‘And if it mixes with matter, he gives his fragrance to the Light, and in his repose, he causes it to surpass every form and every sound. For it is not the ears that smell the fragrance, but it is the breath that has the sense of smell and attracts the fragrance to itself, and is submerged in the fragrance of the Father, so that he thus shelters it, and takes it

to the place where it came from, from the first fragrance, which is grown cold. It is something in a psychic form, being like cold water which has frozen, which is on earth that is not solid, of which those who see it think it is earth; afterwards, it dissolves again. If a breath draws it, it gets hot. The fragrances, therefore, that are cold are from the division. For this reason, faith came; it dissolved the division, and it brought the warm pleroma of love, in order that the cold should not come again, but that there should be the unity of perfect thought.

It is a thing that falls, and it is a thing that easily stands upright again, in the discovery of him who has come to himwhom he shall bring back. For the bringing-back is called repentance.’ ✠



## BOOK REVIEW: THE NUCTEMERON OF APOLLONIUS OF TYANA

# the twelve hours of liberation

J. van Rijckenborgh's commentaries show that the seemingly obscure texts of Apollonius radiate a clear light, so intense that it is able to reach our time undiminished. In twelve stages or 'hours', the eternal light is realised in the microcosm. Below, you will find the twelve texts and an introduction to the explanation, given by J. van Rijckenborgh in his book *The Nuctemeron of Apollonius of Tyana*.

**T**he First Hour: 'In unity the demons praised God, losing their wickedness and wrath.'

He who wants to set out on the path of the Universal Gnosis, enters the Johannine path of preparation. What must be prepared? Our microcosm contains (latent) magnetic tensions; it is our individual respiration field, the drive of the subconscious, sometimes called demonic or sinful. Thus we live on the basis of two egos, from reason and from the primordial power. It is important that we accept this fact, and subsequently evoke the healing forces of the Gnosis. Then this new power will be able to affect this complexity by leading us to self-knowledge, to the confrontation of what is conscious with what is subconscious, because seeing the cause means removing it. Gnostic

salvation will then pervade the microcosm and any disharmony will be transformed into harmony. The resistances will lose their wrath and wickedness. The reader will realise that this 'task of the First Hour' requires a radical self-activation, before his former, individual demons will also begin to praise God.

**The Second Hour: 'Through duality the fishes of the Zodiac praise God, the fire serpents entwine the serpent staff and the lightning becomes harmonious.'**

In the First Hour, the human being has liberated himself in order to be able to walk the Path. This is followed by the confrontation with the great astral world: the power of duality, the play of changes. Without victory in the First Hour, we will not make progress

here. Now the human being should develop the method of making the opposites in nature equal, in this way clearing a passage through the Red Sea of the sidereal birth for himself. The two fishes of Pisces represent the divine human being as well as the nature-bound human being. These opposites should be made equal, neutralised, through the cross, that is, by divine love. What matters is that we no longer kindle desires in the serpent staff. The only activity, now emanating from the candidate, is love on the basis of a directedness towards the world of the soul state: the fishes praise God. All magnetic tensions have disappeared during the First Hour. Now the human being is able to pass through the sidereal fire undisturbed. The deep longing for the divine human being is the continuous praise. This will result in emptying, and now 'the fire serpents entwine the serpent staff'. It is an intense change in the serpent-fire column: now the clear light of the silent flame radiates, from which the whole being is nourished in a harmonious way. This refers to inner harmony. Thus, we see in the Second Hour how tremendous the change in a person can be and must be, if he is to make progress on the Path.

**The Third Hour: 'The serpents of the serpent staff of Hermes are thrice-entwined. Cerberus opens its triple muzzle, and the fire praises God with lightning's three tongues.'**

If the silent burning of desirelessness has been



achieved, the human being becomes a worker in the service of the Light. To this end, he must forge the sword, the serpent staff, the spirit-fire column. Armed with this new fire, he engages in battle against Cerberus, the hellhound. Legend says that we should possess the caduceus to cross the Styx, the river that separates this world from the underworld. Now the power of the sword opposes the serpent in the auric being, the mirror of the past that is manifested in the serpent staff. The new power is able to neutralise this. All demons, the grotesque forms in the respiration field, disappear. Cerberus is the microcosmic gatekeeper. How can we pass him? Do away with any anxiety, worry and fear, even the fear of losing the Gnosis, which fear would result in fanaticism. In the Second Hour, we have learned to bear the cross of love in inner peace. As long as this is not yet the case, Cerberus cannot be passed. This does not concern cultivated courage! An aspect of Cerberus is dogma. Any doctrine has a dogmatic aspect. Cerberus wants to suffocate people in it; it is the pitfall of theology. Cerberus represents the dogmatic instincts from the past. We can

## Do away with any anxiety, worry and fear, even the fear of losing the Gnosis, which fear would result in fanaticism

liberate ourselves from them by carrying out and fulfilling what has been learned, in pure deed.

**The Fourth Hour:** ‘In the fourth hour the soul returns from visiting the graves. It is the time the four magical lanterns are lighted at the four corners of the circles. It is the hour of enchantments and delusions.’

In the Third Hour, the dangers of fear, dogmatism and idols, the threefold muzzle of Cerberus, have been neutralised by the three tongues of lightning, the threefold power of the renewed serpent staff. In the fourth magical hour, the human being shows that he is able to walk the magical path. Now he is prepared. Thus equipped, he himself must take steps, make decisions, learn to use new faculties and overcome the problems of the initial stage and his untrained nature. The soul must return from visiting the graves of our world, filled with distraction! To this end, four lanterns are needed to neutralise four enchantments and delusions. They are: the imitation by mixing truth and lies – the poison of false teachings – the love for the sham world of dialectics – acting without the high reason. Standing on the magical square of the Rosicrucians, the human being is able to overcome them. Its four aspects are group unity, one-pointedness of purpose, living without struggle and harmony in all expressions of life. In this context, it is important to use pure reason, the pure will, pure feeling, and pure action. What

matters is to keep the four lanterns burning until the return while visiting the graves during the journey of the soul through the four circles of the nature of death.

**The Fifth Hour:** ‘The Voice of the Great Waters glorifies the God of the heavenly spheres.’

It is the hour of the victory, the absolute liberation. The voice of the great waters is the primordial atom of the All, the A-E-I-O-U of the Cathars. Five vowels open frontiers of a new future, while the past is closed. The voice of the great waters brings peace. Since the twin forces have been overcome, it brings the vacuum of the new soul state.

**The Sixth Hour:** ‘The spirit remains immobile; he sees hell’s monsters advancing upon him, yet he is fearless.’

After the fifth hour of the victory and equipped with new powers, as a free human being and ‘without fear’, he now stands in the world, but is no longer of the world. The spirit keeps itself immobile. This is not escaping from the world, but it is fulfilling a task by order of the universal Light. It is being a king-priest. He who truly wants to help a living creature, should know the deepest causes of that life. A radiation science underlies it. Which forces, ‘hell’s monsters’, control humanity? It is a mysterious knowledge, granted to those who are in the service of the sixth hour.

## From the eighth hour on, he can help turn suffering into peace with the radiant power of love

**The Seventh Hour:** ‘A fire imparting life to all soul beings is directed by the will of pure people. The initiate stretches forth his hand and suffering passes into peace.’

After the purification of the respiration field, the free human being is no longer caught in the web of fate. Now he has his original faculties at his disposal and has forged a link with the other, healing universe; he stands in a firepower that he is able to control with his purified will. He is ready for the eighth hour; from now on, he can help turn suffering into peace with the radiant power of love.

**The Eighth Hour:** ‘The stars speak to each other. The soul of the suns responds to the sigh of the flowers. Harmony’s chains render all the creatures of nature in agreement with each other.’

In the seventh hour, the priestly human being was filled with the healing spirit. Now he understands from within the language of the stars, the language of the radiations. He is able to ‘test the spirits to see whether they are of God’. He sees the rose in the heart; he sees the ‘golden wonder flower’, the centre of the pure, new consciousness in the forehead. He fathoms the deepest cause of suffering, and the radiation fullness of the Holy Grail becomes active in him: he can work with this power, unto the salvation of the yearning rose heart of the seeking human being. ‘The soul of the suns responds to the sigh of the flowers.’ In this way, all go up, bound by the chains of universal

love, into a new, universal, eternal harmony.

**The Ninth Hour:** ‘The number that may not be revealed.’

The number 9 is related to the astral plane. He who is unable to distinguish between the old, earthly, and the new, heavenly, astral forces (those of the ‘garden of the gods’), remains exposed to mystification, to the anarchy of the twin forces of dialectics. The number 9 can only be revealed to the living new soul. In total, seven mysteries of the ninth hour are revealed to him. He will affect the source of chaos and desperation and make every effort to bring straying humanity home again to the point of departure of yore: the soul world.

**The Tenth Hour:** ‘It is the key of the astronomical cycle and of the rotation of man’s life.’

In the ninth hour, it became clear that the gnostic-magical human being possesses a key to open all prison doors. Ten refers to a new cycle, a new, cosmic perspective. Within themselves, aeons are neutral forces; it is the human being, the ignorant alchemist, who leads the aeons to wickedness. This is also the background of the commandment ‘not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil’. We now live on a cosmic plane where good and evil have been unbound, in which the flames of disharmony caused a degenerative chain reaction and the human being was tossed to and fro between good and evil. An

emergency order was designed for him: our material world. He who is able to use the key of the tenth hour, will be aware that ultimately every fallen entity must be raised into the universal Light, and will exert himself to this end.

**The Eleventh Hour: ‘The wings of the genii move with a mysterious rustle; they fly from one sphere to the other and convey the messages of God from world to world.’**

The initiated worker of the tenth hour receives the key both to the astronomical cycle as well as to the rotating movement of humanity. They are the forces and possibilities, with which the gnostic magician, also called the wings of the genii, is allowed to work. He makes the astral fire subservient to his will, and he is able to use the pure power of Abraxas as a panacea for humanity. This help of pure power is spread as protecting wings.

**The Twelfth Hour: ‘Here the works of the eternal Light are being fulfilled by the Fire.’**

The winged genii of the eleventh hour, the high initiates, have overcome the planetary astral impediments. And now the Nuctemeron ends jubilantly: the works of the eternal Light, the practice of the law of universal love that saves what is lost, is fulfilled. Nevertheless, the gnostic magician must be aware of the dangers of his work:

- he should not allow himself to be caught in the warren of dialectical bonds;

- he should not allow himself to be withheld by the resistance he evokes.

Four merciful effects will guide him through these dangers:

- the Gnosis ensures the impossibility of desecration;
- being a participant in the soul community gives him strength;
- he possesses the power of distinction of spirits,
- and he possesses the faculty of absolute invincibility. In this way, the works of the eternal Light are fulfilled.

It will be clear that the Nuctemeron implies a method, a path to absolute liberation. Our brief overview is meant as an invitation to the reader not only to become acquainted with, but also to immerse himself in the description of the great perspectives that J. van Rijckenborgh unfolds in his book. ★

# the life of apollonius of tyana

At critical moments in the development of humanity, often, great sages come into the world as messengers. One of them was the neo-Pythagorean philosopher Apollonius of Tyana, a town in Cappadocia (current Turkey). He lived from 2 BC to 98 AD. His life has been recorded by the Roman author Philostratus.

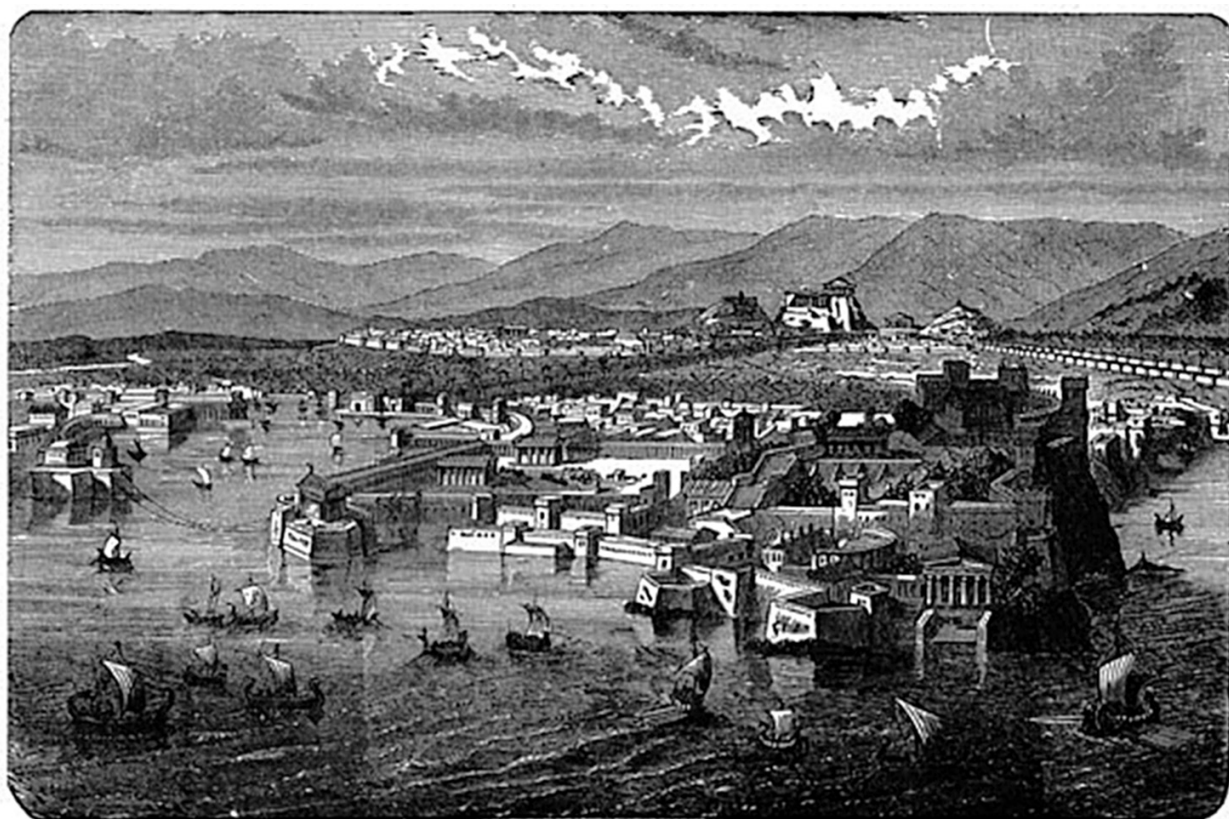
It was their often-impossible task to remind humanity of its divine descent and to encourage it to live accordingly again. By their holy and pure life, they showed how the forces of the Supernature affect our world. They were able to make them perceptible again for the benefit of the human being. In this way, they were able to save others and themselves in what seems to us, a ‘magical’ way. They showed us the path and demonstrated special signs, because nature was their ally. It was told of Jesus that he was able to walk on water, that he arose after having been crucified, that he healed people and was able to give them exceptional advice. His life was a symbolic inspiration for all who felt the original life vibrate in them. Apollonius of Tyana, too, proved to be able to perform ‘miracles’. Yet, how can we tell who he was? It seems the passage of time has tried to wipe away his history, and to a large extent, the overzealous work of an ambitious cleric, bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, is to be blamed for this. Apollonius was so popular that, at the beginning of the fourth century, the bishop was unable to do anything other than to point out the dubious nature of the biography, written during the second century, to those who worshipped him. Eusebius’ patronising writings did not fail to be effective. Everything was done to erase the existence of Apollonius of Tyana from the memory of humanity, because there could, after all, be one Messiah only. Many records about Apollonius have been lost and destroyed,

with the exception of some correspondence with emperors, consuls and philosophers, plus the notes and diaries of his faithful pupil, Damis, whom Apollonius had met during his journeys through Mesopotamia, and on which Philostratus based his biography.

**HIS LIFE** It was Julia Domna, the studious and philosophical spouse of the Roman emperor Septimius Severus (emperor from 193-211), who asked Philostratus to edit the extensive material that she had received from a distant relative of Damis, and to turn it into an easily readable book. On the basis of this material, Flavius Philostratus, a well-known Greek philosopher and author, rewrote the biography, approximately a hundred years after Apollonius’ purported death.

It is assumed that Apollonius was born around the year 4 BC or 2 AD in the southeast of Turkey in the small village of Tyana at the foot of the Taurus Mountains. Shortly before his birth, Apollonius’ mother had a vision, in which the god Proteus – one of Poseidon’s sons – told her that it was he who would become her son.

Similar to the story around Jesus’ birth, also the story around Apollonius’ coming is lavishly adorned with legends. Legend tells us that his mother fell asleep in a meadow. Swans formed a circle around her and suddenly began to shout loudly at the moment of birth. A bolt of lightning came from the sky, which also retracted into it again.



**Nineteenth-century representation of ancient Athens seen from Piraeus, at the time of Apollonius of Tyana**

Often, birds are a universal symbol to refer to the pure world and activity of the Spirit during great eras and cycles. In this sense, the swans may signal the beginning of a new era. The bolt of lightning reflects the great cosmic power that accompanied the incarnation of this long-expected messenger. Apollonius' birth into this world has been

fantastically, although not very realistically, described. It has more in common with notable births of holy messengers such as Gautama the Buddha and of Jesus the Lord. Ultimately, he was called Apollonius of Tyana, but no one knows for sure where or when he was born, and it is even unclear where and when he died. The little that we are able to derive from



Roman wall mosaic with an image of Neptune and Amphitrite in Herculaneum, Southern Italy

Damis' biography is that he was sometime called Euphorbus.

At a young age, Apollonius joined the temple of Aesculapius in Aegae, where he studied medicine. At the time, the temple was also a place of healing, comparable to current hospi-

tals, the difference being that more attention was paid to the soul than is usual in modern medicine.

After his studies and after his father had died, he first travelled through Pamphilia and Sicily and improved the conditions of life of the

## ‘Let us go, Apollonius, while you follow God, and I you’

local population there. And thus it happened that Euxenus, former teacher of Apollonius, once asked him ‘why such a noble thinker as he was and someone who commanded such a subtle use and feeling for languages had not yet written a book’. He replied: ‘Because I have not yet learned to be silent.’ From that moment, he was silent for five years. Subsequently, he travelled to India, looking for the wise adepts living there, and in Nineveh, current Baghdad in Iraq, he met his disciple and biographer Damis. Damis was so impressed by Apollonius that he said: ‘Let us go, Apollonius, while you follow God, and I you.’ While travelling, Damis learned a great deal about philosophy and the country, but above all about Apollonius and his simple way of life. On their way through Mesopotamia, they were once ordered into the office of a toll official and questioned about his luggage. What he was taking out of the country? Apollonius replied:

‘I take with me moderation, justice, virtue, self-control, chastity, courage and discipline.’ And we do not know whether Apollonius did this deliberately, but in this way, he accidentally combined a number of feminine words (Justitia, Pudencia, Temperantia). The official smelled a source of taxation and said: ‘You must register these female slaves in the books.’ ‘That is impossible,’ Apollonius reposted, ‘because they are not female slaves, which I take along, but noble ladies.’

During his numerous visits to kings, the sage of Tyana was more than once invited to participate in sacrifices to the gods, but he participated in those practices as little as possible. He excused himself and withdrew, saying:

‘O King, continue with your sacrifice in your own way, but allow me to sacrifice in my way.’ And he took a handful of incense and said: ‘O Sun, send me as far over the world as it pleases me and you. May I meet good people, but never hear of bad ones, nor they of me.’ And after having spoken these words, he threw the incense into the fire and left the king, because he did not want to be present during the shedding of blood.

Fascinating were his meetings with the sages of India. There the adepts trained and taught Apollonius for his great mission: Leading and possibly stopping the quickly degenerating Roman Empire, where a few cruel emperors and their servants ruthlessly indulged in rituals and black magic. Only one man was considered suitable for this task, and this was Apollonius. Tradition relates that two emperors accused him of treason: both Nero (emperor from 54–68) as well as Domitianus (emperor from 81–96). However, the sage miraculously escaped a conviction. Finally, he founded a school in Ephesus, where he stayed until his death, at the age of almost a hundred years. Philostratus increased the mystery surrounding the life of his hero by saying: ‘Concerning his death, if he has died at all, the testimonies differ.’

‘There is no death  
of anyone save  
in appearance only,  
just as there is no birth  
of anyone, except only  
in appearance’

**A LETTER OF APOLLONIUS** Apart from the reports by Damis, Philostratus also possessed a few short letters of Apollonius. They, too, testify to the great wisdom of the adept of Tyana. One of them was addressed to Valerius Asiaticus, consul in the year 70. It is a philosophically tinted letter to comfort the reader and to make the loss of his son somewhat bearable. ‘There is no death of anyone save in appearance only, just as there is no birth of anyone, except only in appearance. When a thing passes from Being into Becoming, this seems to be death, but in truth no one is born, nor does he die. He is simply visible at one time and later on invisible, the former owing to the density of its material, and the latter by the tenuous state of Being which, however, remains always the same, and is only subject to differences of movement and state. For being necessarily has the characteristic of change caused not by anything outside, but by a division of the whole into the parts, and by a return of the parts into the whole, due to the oneness of the All. But if someone asks: What is this, which is at one time visible, and at another invisible, as it presents itself in the same or in different objects? – it may be answered that it is characteristic of everything in the world here below which, when it is filled with matter, becomes visible because of the resistance of its density, but it is invisible because of its very tenuous nature in case the matter surrounding it disappears, although matter still surrounds it and flows through it in this unbelievably large

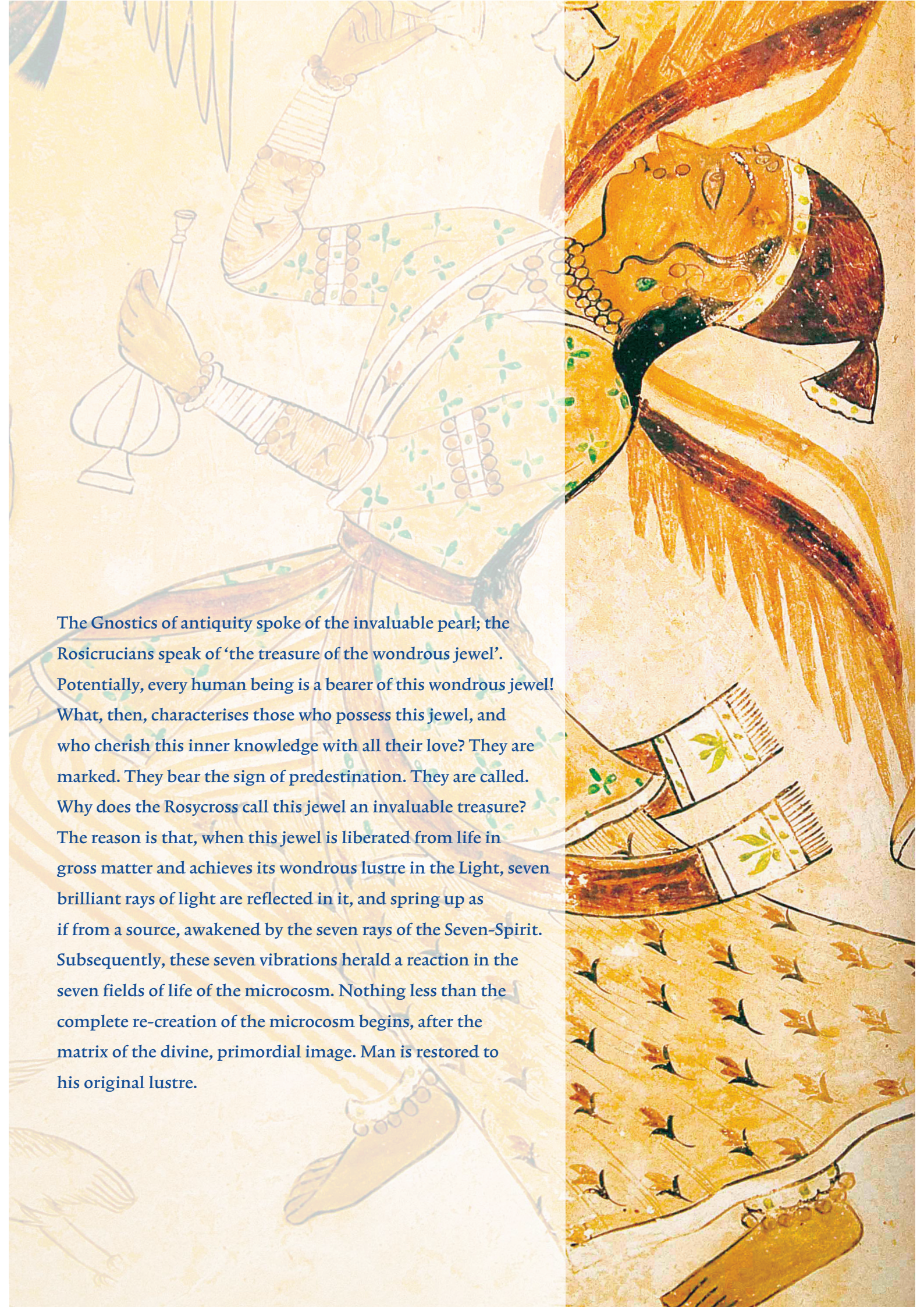


**Impression of ancient Athens with the Horlogion or the Tower of the Winds, built in 50 BC**

space that contains it, but does not know birth or death. But why is it that this wrong idea (of being born and dying) has passed unrefuted for so long? Some think that they themselves have brought about what happens through them. They do not know that an individual, brought into the world by parents, is not begotten by its parents, any more than what grows by means of the earth, grows out of the earth. The change that befalls the individual is not caused by his visible environment, but only by the one thing that lives in every individual.’ ♀

This is a very abbreviated introduction, based on an article by Fred A. Pruyn, in *Thesophische Verkenningen* (Theosophical Explorations), October 2005

A list of references of all articles may be obtained from the editors



The Gnostics of antiquity spoke of the invaluable pearl; the Rosicrucians speak of 'the treasure of the wondrous jewel'. Potentially, every human being is a bearer of this wondrous jewel! What, then, characterises those who possess this jewel, and who cherish this inner knowledge with all their love? They are marked. They bear the sign of predestination. They are called. Why does the Rosycross call this jewel an invaluable treasure? The reason is that, when this jewel is liberated from life in gross matter and achieves its wondrous lustre in the Light, seven brilliant rays of light are reflected in it, and spring up as if from a source, awakened by the seven rays of the Seven-Spirit. Subsequently, these seven vibrations herald a reaction in the seven fields of life of the microcosm. Nothing less than the complete re-creation of the microcosm begins, after the matrix of the divine, primordial image. Man is restored to his original lustre.